

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SCHOOL DISTRICT 4J, LANE COUNTY, OREGON**

October 1, 2008

The Board of Directors of School District No. 4J, Lane County, Eugene, Oregon, held a work session at 5:30 p.m. on October 1, 2008, at the Education Center, 200 North Monroe Street, Eugene, Oregon, followed by a regular meeting at 7 p.m. Notice of the meeting was mailed to the media and posted in the Education Center on September 26, 2008, and published in *The Register-Guard* on September 29, 2008.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS:

Charles Martinez, Jr., Chair
Yvette Webber-Davis, Vice Chair
Eric Forrest
Beth Gerot
Alicia Hays
Craig Smith
Jim Torrey

STAFF:

George Russell, Superintendent of Schools and District Clerk
Barbara Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director
Yvonne Curtis, Director of Student Achievement
Susan Fahey, Chief Financial Officer
Celia Feres-Johnson, Director of Human Resources
Tom Henry, Deputy Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer
Kay Mehas, Director of School Services
Laurie Moses, Director of High School Services

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

Mallory Bray, Churchill High School
Lizzy Monroe, South Eugene High School
Linda Gai, IHS, All Campuses
Joe Kammerer, North Eugene High School
Joel Iboa, Sheldon High School

MEDIA:

KRVM

WORK SESSION: Conduct a Work Session on New Teacher Mentoring and Professional Development

Board Chair Charles Martinez welcomed the board and staff to the work session and informed them the purpose of the work session was to help the board understand and frame issues of professional development and mentoring of new teachers.

Human Resources Director Celia Feres-Johnson noted that the new mentorship program had been a very successful venture between Instruction and the Oregon Education Association

(OEA). She proceeded to introduce Eugene Education Association (EEA) members Paul Duchin and Dayna Mitchell.

Mr. Duchin gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Eugene 4J Mentor/Induction Program," noting that it was one of the most passionate and respected programs that the EEA was involved in. As part of the slide presentation, Mr. Duchin explained that the programs of the mentoring initiative were in part based on the models of education consultant Charlotte Danielson.

Mr. Duchin cited the effectiveness of the 4J mentoring program itself as well as the cooperation between the district and EEA as possible reasons why the rate of teachers departing the profession in Eugene was considerably less than the national average.

Board member Craig Smith, responding to a statistic from the presentation that most new teachers leave the profession within three years, asked if the national rate of teachers leaving was more than 50%. Mr. Duchin confirmed that it was, but that 4J was historically not losing teachers at such an alarmingly high rate.

Mr. Duchin proceeded to brief the board on the background and history of the mentoring program, noting that the induction aspects of the program had been specifically requested by Superintendent George Russell. He explained that the EEA's creation of the mentor/induction program had originated with a visit by him and EEA Co-President Merri Steele to two similarly sized suburban school districts in the Chicago, Illinois area. He also explained that the mentor/induction program eventually created by the EEA was essentially a hybrid of the two Chicago districts where new teachers could not only be mentored individually, but collectively as well.

Mr. Duchin, responding to a question from board member Beth Gerot, said that nearly 100% of new teachers in the district had participated in the mentoring/induction program since its inception in 2004, even though participation in the program was not compulsory.

Mr. Duchin proceeded to summarize the goals of the mentor/induction program from his slide presentation.

Ms. Mitchell, in reviewing the components of the mentor/induction program for the board, commented that the EEA had partnered with Pacific University, the University of Oregon and Northwest Christian University in their efforts to expand and enhance the program.

Ms. Mitchell noted that the mentor/induction program offered university or district credit which could be applied to the salary schedule for new teachers. Deputy Superintendent Tom Henry added that the contract language allowing such credit for new teachers met the same thresholds and requirements as university coursework.

Ms. Mitchell briefly explained how the two sections of the mentor/induction program, Academy 1 and Academy 2, worked together and complimented each other.

Ms. Mitchell noted that there were 49 participants in the Academy 1 section of the mentor/induction program in 2008, down from 76 the previous year.

Ms. Mitchell, responding to questions from Mr. Smith, noted that the mentors in the program were compensated with a flat stipend as well as per diem for their participation, and that the

trainees were similarly compensated at a contractually determined professional development rate.

Mr. Smith asked if the EEA anticipated a continued decrease in the number of new teachers participating in the mentor/induction program. Mr. Duchin replied that while the district may be headed into a period where fewer new teachers were hired, either as a result of improved retention or economic downturn, he did not anticipate participation decreases as drastic as that between the current and previous years.

Ms. Mitchell, responding to a question from Mr. Smith, confirmed that the cohorts in the program, who were focused on mentoring groups of new teachers as opposed to only individuals, taught at commensurate grade levels as their trainees.

Ms. Mitchell noted that there were 40 participants in the Academy 2 section of the mentor/induction program in 2008, of which only 13 participants were from districts other than 4J.

Board member Jim Torrey asked if the EEA would be providing additional mentoring for middle school level math and English teachers in order to deal with the new graduation requirements. Mr. Duchin replied that additional mentoring would be provided as much as possible.

Ms. Mitchell proceeded to brief the board on the anticipated needs and support of the mentor/induction program.

Mr. Duchin summarized saying he was very proud of the program, but that he was well aware that there might be improved ways to provide mentoring opportunities. He welcomed the input of the board with respect to the mentor/induction program.

Mr. Torrey indicated he would be very interested in the adoption of a reading endorsement program as part of the mentor/induction program.

Mr. Henry noted that the district had a credit bank set up with Pacific University, the University of Oregon, and Northwest Christian University through which teachers could participate in reading endorsement programs.

Ms. Mitchell noted that one of the newer models incorporated into the mentor/induction program this year was the implementation of staff development specialists whose job was to focus on the implementation of a language arts adoption. She added that those specialists were able to assist in the mentoring efforts of the program.

Mr. Torrey commented that the mentor/induction program might be an ideal avenue for those teachers who might otherwise feel intimidated about seeking additional assistance or training. In response to Mr. Torrey's comments, Mr. Duchin noted that the mentor/induction program was not designed to be part of an evaluation process that might have the effect of scaring off new teachers, but rather a collective avenue of support to help teachers succeed in their new positions. Mr. Torrey summarized by saying he wanted to make sure that teachers felt it was okay to ask for help when they needed it.

Ms. Mitchell said the anecdotal evidence she had heard from teachers participating in the program indicated they felt comfortable and not intimidated in any way. She said that the number of teachers indicating an interest in the program had increased dramatically since its inception.

Dr. Martinez, in pointing out the goal of the program to transmit the culture of the district to newly hired educators, maintained such a goal was potentially risky as it might transmit the negative aspects of the culture of the district as well as the positive ones. Mr. Duchin responded that most of the mentors in the program were selected by a committee, including himself and Mr. Henry, who shared Dr. Martinez's concerns. While he acknowledged the risk identified by Dr. Martinez, Mr. Duchin felt that the mentors the committee selected were highly focused on transmitting those elements of the district's culture that would positively affect the students' educational experience.

Mr. Duchin said that when the program debriefed its mentors during their regular January training sessions, each mentor said that the program was one of the most invigorating and exciting endeavors that they had ever experienced professionally.

Dr. Martinez noted he wanted to see mentoring programs such as the one presented by Mr. Duchin and Ms. Mitchell become the antidote to any lack of cultural diversity or academic innovation in the culture of the district. He maintained he had come in contact with several district students over the last few years whose educational experience reflected a lack of courage and innovation. Mr. Duchin responded that he would welcome the board's input in making the mentor/induction program more effective in addressing that problem.

Director of Student Achievement Yvonne Curtis noted that she had never heard any district administrators give any negative feedback regarding the mentor/induction program. She felt that continuing and developing the mentor/induction program would enable the district to facilitate a culture that would be positive and rewarding for all teachers and students. She noted that developing the program might enable the mentors to provide better feedback to district administrators about what new teachers actually needed, which was a component that was not currently offered by the program.

Ms. Curtis felt that the careful selection of mentors by Mr. Duchin, Ms. Mitchell and several others had been one of the primary reasons for the success of the mentor/induction program.

Mr. Duchin, responding to a question from Ms. Curtis, noted that the mentors in the program had not yet participated in the district's diversity training, although it was due to be offered to the mentors as part of the district's upcoming seminar series.

Board Vice Chair Yvette Webber-Davis asked if teachers making use of the credit bank being offered to them were taking courses based on their own interests, or on the specific needs of the district or their particular school. Mr. Duchin replied that the teachers serving as mentors in the program were using the credit bank for both reasons. He added that the contractual language for new teachers contained the stipulation that if the district asked a teacher to take a course the district would pay for it, which had the effect of making the district fiscally reluctant to make such suggestions. He commented that when the credit vouchers were distributed to the mentors in the program, they were used for a wide variety of professional development courses, but that they were most often used to help the teachers become better qualified under guidelines dictated by state law.

Board member Alicia Hays commented she was a little bit frustrated with the credit bank as she had met a couple of Lane County employees who had left the county only so they could have access to the credit bank.

Mr. Duchin noted that over \$300,000 in credit support was available to district teachers and administrators, which not only provided a substantial savings to the district, but also benefited the district's efforts to retain the best, most-qualified new teachers.

Mr. Henry, speaking with regard to Dr. Martinez's concerns about the culture of the district and how that culture might be affected by mentoring programs, noted he had attended the National Principals Initiative conference over the summer where he had learned that similar mentoring programs to those being offered by the EEA had fostered only the more positive characteristics of the district culture.

Dr. Martinez commented that the mentor/induction program had invigorated the mentors and other early career professionals, which could only have positive effects.

Mr. Duchin noted that the new teachers coming out of the local university systems were very well-trained.

Ms. Curtis noted that she had considered presenting additional information in the work session regarding professional development within the district, but that she felt it best to allow Mr. Duchin and Ms. Mitchell to focus on their presentation regarding the mentor/induction program.

Dr. Martinez adjourned the work session at 6:46 p.m. A brief break was taken prior to convening the regular board meeting.

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND FLAG SALUTE

Board Chair Charles Martinez called the meeting of the School District 4J Board of Directors to order at 7:01 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA REVIEW

Superintendent George Russell noted that there was a revised agenda for the board meeting, adding items regarding the Lane Community College bond measure and the opposition to Measure 60 to the Items for Action at a Future Meeting portion of the agenda. Superintendent Russell further deemed that the agenda item regarding the revision to the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook should be postponed to a future board meeting.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Russell introduced Lane Community College (LCC) President Mary Spilde and noted she would be speaking later in the meeting.

Superintendent Russell noted he had met with the Monroe Middle School site council earlier in the day to discuss the local option levy. He noted that the Monroe site council had extended an invitation to the board for their upcoming parent committee meeting.

Superintendent Russell stated that the current edition of *The Superintendent's Pipeline* newsletter distributed to the board contained a number of articles related to graduation requirements, essential skills and other topics that would be discussed later in the meeting.

Superintendent Russell felt the recent board retreat had gone very well and noted that certain agenda items for the meeting were the direct result of discussions at that retreat.

Superintendent Russell noted that board member Beth Gerot would be forwarding an email from Kathy Firestone regarding a Supreme Court hearing the following week.

Superintendent Russell also noted that the rubber infill planned for the fields at Spencer Butte Middle School and the Arts and Technology Academy was due to begin on October 2, but might be postponed if the weather was unsuitable.

COMMENTS BY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

South Eugene High School representative Lizzy Monroe reported they had conducted their school-wide club day earlier in the day and that as a member of the South Eugene recycling program she had signed up more than 60 students to join the recycling program.

North Eugene High School representative Joe Kammerer reported on a recent event called the Idea School where between 20 and 30 students stayed after school to study for mid-term exams with their teachers. He noted that the Idea School student leadership had also conducted a voter registration drive for 18 year-olds, and that the current enrollment for North Eugene was 1,013 students.

Eugene International High School representative Linda Gai had no events on which to report.

Sheldon High School representative Joel Iboa reported on the status of advisor shops for seniors at Sheldon, noting that the current manner in which the shops were being conducted was causing a measurable amount of stress between students and faculty. He also reported that he had recently returned from the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) conference in Wisconsin where he had learned a great deal about ways to address the achievement gap.

Churchill High School representative Mallory Bray reported that the club fair for Churchill would be taking place next week.

Mr. Iboa, responding to a question from Ms. Hays, said that seven of his fellow students had attended the MSAN conference he had mentioned.

ITEMS RAISED BY THE AUDIENCE

Mary Spilde, speaking in her capacity as president of Lane Community College, came before the board to present information regarding bond Measure 20-142 and to inform them how the bond measure would affect School District 4J. She commented that the bond measure was created to provide funding for much-needed updates to various instructional facilities, equipment and technology. She expressed that the district would be most directly affected by the LCC bond measure as it related to their Regional Technical Education Consortium (RTEC), which was a group formed approximately four years ago with the input of the superintendents of all Lane County school districts. Ms. Spilde commented that the RTEC had been formed to provide vocational career technical education to high school students throughout the Lane County school districts. She further noted that the current bond measure would provide for a dedicated RTEC facility on the LCC campus that would serve as a hub for exposing students to vocational education opportunities.

Ms. Spilde noted that the estimated annual cost of the bond would be approximately 25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value which is similar to the rate of the LCC bond measure passed in 1995.

Ms. Spilde commented that the College Now program provided by LCC to area high school students had allowed over 2,000 School District 4J students to earn approximately 12,000 college credits before graduation in the 2007-08 school year. She noted that the value of the credits earned throughout the year by those students would be approximately \$1 million.

Ms. Spilde reported that the LCC board of directors would be reprising the strategic conversation with Lane County school districts from four years ago in order to determine how best to proceed. She noted that both Superintendent Russell and Dr. Martinez would be meeting with the LCC board later in the year.

Al King commented he had spoken to the board on several previous occasions urging the board to support the three metro districts.

COMMENTS BY EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Paul Duchin, speaking as Co-President of the Eugene Education Association (EEA), noted that he took very seriously the issue of leadership of the EEA beyond his and Co-President Merri Steele's tenure.

Mr. Duchin appreciated that the board had taken firm positions in opposition to Measures 58 and 59. He further noted that bond Measure 20-142 had the full support of the EEA.

Mr. Duchin noted that the EEA was pleased that the board was considering a resolution to oppose ballot Measure 60 regarding statewide teacher merit pay.

Mr. Duchin noted that the EEA's new phone banks with regard to the upcoming elections would be beginning their operations soon.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Receive a Report on Essential Skills and Graduation Requirements

Director of High School Services Laurie Moses introduced High School Services Administrator Brad New to present their report on essential skills and graduation requirements.

Ms. Moses and Mr. New proceeded to give a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Essential Skills" for the benefit of the board. Ms. Moses noted that the presentation had been previously provided to all middle and high school teachers in the district on August 26. She also noted that Dr. Webber-Davis had been shown the presentation as part of her work with the district's Graduation Requirements Committee (GRC). Ms. Moses and Mr. New proceeded to brief the board on the central themes of the Essential Skills presentation, which included: 1) The basic definitions of the process skills listed under the Essential Skills banner; 2) A preliminary timeline for the adoption of the Essential Skills guidelines and evaluative procedures; 3) The cultural and economic impetuses of the Essential Skills processes; and 4) The Connected By 25 study results which had identified those students most likely to benefit from the Essential Skills process.

Mr. Torrey asked how current ninth grade students in the district might be evaluated with respect to the Essential Skills process and how additional resources might be provided to those students if necessary. Ms. Moses replied that there were teams within the district currently

tracking the progress of targeted ninth graders, and that the regularly scheduled progress reports would provide notification to parents if their child required additional resources.

Board member Eric Forrest, in response to Mr. Torrey's comments and speaking as the parent of a district high school student, said he was amazed at what current district students were unable to get away with regarding their progress reports. He noted that district staff was to be credited for their diligence in that regard.

Ms. Moses reviewed the statistics of the Connected By 25 study, and noted that while the statistics were generated by studies conducted primarily in the Portland area, they were equally applicable to district students in Eugene.

Ms. Hays commented that one of the notable goals of the Essential Skills process was how it addressed the problems of students failing core courses and subsequently less likely to graduate from high school. Ms. Moses elaborated saying that the intervention and double-blocking procedures provided in the Essential Skills processes at both the middle and high school levels would be critical in addressing those concerns.

Ms. Gerot felt that the Essential Skills process would be absolutely critical for students at the middle school level as that was where kids were most likely to start a failing track where they would be much less likely to graduate. Ms. Hays elaborated upon Ms. Gerot's comments noting that it would be very important to change middle school students' perceptions that their work at the middle school level was essentially irrelevant. Ms. Moses commented that one of the groups working under the Essential Skills charter was known as "Making Middle School Meaningful" and had been formed to address those very concerns.

Ms. Moses, responding to a question from Mr. Torrey, noted that as part of the Essential Skills process, middle school students might eventually be given the opportunity to earn high school course credit while still in middle school.

Ms. Moses proceeded to brief the board on the current professional assessment statistics for students, as well as on how students would be evaluated under the Essential Skills guidelines. Mr. New commented that some assessment procedures such as the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) reading, math and writing assessments had already been identified and endorsed by the Oregon State Board of Education (OSBE). He noted that district staff member Jim Conaghan was coordinating with the OSBE to determine further assessment procedures.

Ms. Gerot asked how the Essential Skills process would be overseen so that districts might employ their own scoring guidelines while at the same time ensuring that the quality of education in one area might be commensurate with the rest of the state. Mr. New noted that the goal within the locally operated Essential Skills process would be to create as much reliability with respect to professional development as possible. Mr. New confirmed for Ms. Gerot that the possibility of measurably different educational standards across varying school districts certainly existed.

Mr. Torrey reminded Mr. New and Ms. Moses that he was a member of the GRC and noted that the issue of differentiation of standards across varying school districts was of grave concern to the committee. He noted that the GRC felt that allowing standards to differentiate from district to district could eventually harm the credibility of not only the Essential Skills process but also that of the district itself. He said that it might be advisable to have district high schools

evaluated using Oregon Education Service District (ESD) guidelines to provide some measure of consistency with regard to standards that might be dictated by the Essential Skills process.

Ms. Moses noted that a district-wide standard of educational proficiency in the extended application component of the graduation requirements was one of the ultimate goals of the Essential Skills process.

Dr. Webber-Davis asked if there was any work being done toward aligning the Essential Skills standards with pre-existing advanced placement testing or college entrance exams. Mr. New answered that the Essential Skills process would include a review of AP testing as well as other standardized tests such as the SAT and PSAT in order determine the best manner in which to proceed. He noted that by the end of the current school year they hoped to have set a course of action in that regard.

Mr. Smith asked if there had been any research into how the Essential Skills process was going to play itself out by 2012 and how that might also affect graduation rates in the meantime. Mr. New explained that a statistic in the latest edition of *The Superintendent's Pipeline* indicated that 44% of high school freshmen were currently at risk of not graduating in 2012.

Ms. Moses commented that one of the guiding responsibilities behind the Essential Skills process was that students must be provided multiple opportunities in which to demonstrate proficiency in the essential skills, opportunities which would ideally be provided throughout the students' middle and high school educations.

Mr. New noted that under the Essential Skills requirements, new work samples would be required from the third through the eighth grades, and additionally once again while in high school. He noted that the State Board of Education was looking at implementing the new work sample requirements as soon as possible.

Mr. Smith asked if there had been any determination as to how much the Essential Skills programs would ultimately cost. Ms. Moses did not have exact figures with which to respond to his question, although Mr. New indicated that the district should expect to be ready for the higher costs associated with the Essential Skills processes.

Mr. Torrey indicated there was confusion at both the state and local levels as to what the costs associated with Essential Skills would ultimately be. He questioned how much of a priority the Essential Skills process should be for the district as there were several questions regarding funding which remained unanswered. He questioned the district's ability to make the tough choices that might be necessary to make should the district choose to proceed with the Essential Skills processes.

Dr. Webber-Davis asked if the assessments involved in the Essential Skills processes were in fact part of pre-existing assessment testing or if they involved completely new assessment practices. Ms. Moses replied that pre-existing assessment testing was expected to be used. Mr. New proceeded to brief the board on the increased credit graduation requirements regarding math, science and language arts courses that would be implemented as part of the Essential Skills process.

Ms. Moses summarized her presentation by saying that the response from local teachers regarding the Essential Skills process had been overwhelmingly positive so far. She also noted that the increased work sample requirements were already capable of being met by most district teachers.

Ms. Moses noted that a representative from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) would be attending the next district board meeting in October and would be sharing further information regarding the Essential Skills.

Dr. Webber-Davis asked what was being done to help connect the Essential Skills requirements to other professional development initiatives such as the mentor/induction program discussed during the work session. Ms. Moses said that her office was investigating the possibility of scheduling conferences where teachers could meet and discuss how to integrate the Essential Skills requirements with professional development initiatives.

Mr. Iboa commented that it might be risky to use ninth graders as guinea pigs for the Essential Skills requirements and that there was the possibility that the graduation rates could drop if the requirements were not implemented carefully and thoughtfully.

Ms. Monroe thought the idea of making high school credits available to middle school students was a good idea.

Receive a Report on Eugene/Bethel Boundaries

Mr. Henry reviewed the impetus and process for the corrections regarding the Eugene and Bethel school district boundaries as detailed in materials included in the board packet.

Mr. Henry submitted a corrected list of home addresses affected by the boundary corrections, and noted for the board that 20 residences would be going from 4J into the Bethel school district area, and that 22 other residences would be going from Bethel into the 4J school district area. He reported that four students were residing within the new 4J boundaries who were currently attending schools in the Bethel school district and that there were nine students currently attending 4J schools who would be residing in the Bethel school district under the guidelines of the boundary corrections. Mr. Henry reported that an agreement had been reached between the two districts that would allow each of the affected students to continue their educations at their current schools. He reported that any new students in subsequent years or any students not currently of school age would attend the schools dictated by the new boundary determinations.

Mr. Torrey asked if younger siblings of students affected by the boundary corrections would be allowed to attend their older sibling's school even if that school was now outside of their boundary. Mr. Henry noted that the possibility of siblings being required to attend different schools was a possibility, but that parents could apply for an exchange if they wished.

Mr. Henry noted that the letter to parents from Lane ESD Superintendent Debbie Egan would be going out to parents and families affected by the boundary corrections at the end of the week.

ITEMS FOR ACTION AT THIS MEETING

Approve a Revision to the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook

Dr. Martinez reminded the board that the action item regarding revisions to the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook had been postponed to a future board meeting during the agenda review.

CONSENT GROUP – ITEMS FOR ACTION

Approve Grant Application: Roosevelt Middle School Safe Routes to School

Staff from Roosevelt Middle School submitted a grant application to the Oregon Department of Transportation for \$64,687 for fiscal year 2009 and \$59,275 for fiscal year 2010. The Roosevelt Middle School Safe Routes to School Program Manager will expand his role in the community through his leadership role in the new citywide Eugene Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Team, which will encourage new Eugene school-based SRTS programs through resource support. The Eugene SRTS Team will partner with community stakeholders to offer traffic safety curriculum instruction to K-8 schools as well as co-sponsor citywide SRTS encouragement and educational events. The SRTS Program Manager will continue to address SRTS issues at the Roosevelt pilot school. Lessons learned at Roosevelt will be included in an SRTS Resource Kit which will be available by weblink.

The superintendent recommended approval of the grant application. A copy of the grant description form was included in the board packet.

MOTION: Ms. Gerot, seconded by Mr. Forrest, moved to approve the consent item.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously; 7:0.

ITEMS FOR ACTION AT A FUTURE MEETING

Adopt the Board's Goals and Annual Agenda for 2008-09

Superintendent Russell directed the board to their copies of the draft 2008-09 Board Goals & Annual Agenda document, which tracked the changes from the previous draft distributed at the board's September 17 meeting. He then proceeded to review several of the changes contained in the latest draft for the benefit of the board.

Ms. Gerot, Dr. Martinez and Superintendent Russell briefly discussed how the term "Do what's best for every student" had come to be changed to "Do what's best for all 4J students," in the initial bullet points of the draft agenda.

Superintendent Russell confirmed for Dr. Webber-Davis that all instances of the use of the word "child" throughout the draft agenda had been changed to use the word "student."

Ms. Gerot and Mr. Forrest asked for clarification of the language being used regarding graduation rates in the third key result of the Student Achievement section of the draft agenda. Superintendent Russell noted that it had been previously agreed that language stating a goal of a 50% improvement in the graduation rate would be demonstrative regardless of what standards or accounting procedures were being employed.

Ms. Moses noted that the new graduation calculation rates that would most likely be applicable to the third key result was described in the "Cohort Graduation Rate" article in the latest edition of *The Superintendent's Pipeline*.

Dr. Martinez felt it would be important to establish a baseline for the measurement of improvement in graduation rates.

Mr. Henry commented that the current graduation rate calculations were two years behind, and agreed with Dr. Martinez's comments that a baseline would be strongly advisable. He was unable to comment on what any newer baselines or graduate rate calculation methods might be with regard to the draft agenda.

Mr. Henry, responding to a question from Superintendent Russell, noted it was generally possible to extrapolate graduation rates retroactively and that the state often employed such retroactive calculations.

Mr. Henry suggested that the board change the language further to indicate that the 50% improvement would be from the 2008-09 school year, and by the time the statistics were reflected, any new formulas used to calculate graduation rates would be in effect.

Ms. Gai asked the board how the percentage goals listed in the second key result of the Student Achievement section had been arrived at. Superintendent Russell responded that the numbers indicated a reasonable, but still aspirational goal for the amount of students reaching the OAKS benchmarks in reading and math. Ms. Gai was concerned such a goal might only encourage smarter test-taking practices, and not any substantial improvements in teaching methods or the overall quality of education. Mr. Iboa concurred with Ms. Gai's assessment.

Dr. Martinez noted that the federal requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) had led to a forced focus on meeting benchmarks and test-taking skills. He indicated there was most likely a strong consensus from the board regarding the extent to which standardized tests such as those mandated by NCLB were capable of accurately measuring the learning outcomes that educators cared about.

Dr. Martinez and Superintendent Russell briefly discussed the educational achievement gaps inherent in focusing, whether by accident or by design, on improved test-taking skills over an improved overall quality of a student's educational experience.

Ms. Gerot commented that removing any mention of NCLB from the draft agenda would allow the district to shift the focus away from test-taking skills and more toward improving the overall quality of education. Dr. Martinez concurred with Ms. Gerot's assessment.

Mr. Smith suggested the language of the Student Achievement section of the draft agenda be changed to include mention of the Essential Skills process that was previously discussed. Ms. Gerot responded that there was still no system in place to properly evaluate the effectiveness of the Essential Skills process and that including such language might not be prudent at the present time.

Superintendent Russell proceeded to review the revisions to the key result portions of the Stewardship of District Resources and Stakeholder Engagement sections of the draft agenda.

Superintendent Russell commented that one of the main changes to the Stakeholder Engagement section of the draft agenda was the replacement of the word "parents" with the phrase "families and students."

Superintendent Russell said he would be meeting with the resource principals the following day in order to review the changes to the draft agenda and solicit additional feedback. He noted that a final draft of the agenda would hopefully be ready for the board's review and action by October 15.

Adopt the Revised Guiding Beliefs and Values Statement

Barb Bellamy, Chief of Staff and Communications Director, reviewed the most recent changes to the district's draft Guiding Beliefs and Values statement for the benefit of the board.

Superintendent Russell and Mr. Forrest suggested that all instances of the word "children" in the language of the draft statement be changed to use the word "students" as a similar change had been made in the draft Goals and Annual Agenda document. Ms. Bellamy agreed with the suggestion.

Dr. Martinez disagreed with Superintendent Russell's suggestion, noting that the district statement should reflect the core value that all children could learn, and not just all students. He added that in a values statement such as the one being drafted, it should not be necessary to exclude anyone, whether they were district students or not.

The board briefly discussed the issue of whether to use the word "children" or "students" in the language of the draft values statement.

Ms. Hays concurred with Dr. Martinez's comments on the issue, and suggested that the draft language could use whichever word was most applicable and demonstrative in each separate instance. She offered that the first two bullet points in the Children section of the current draft should read "our students' education and welfare" and "all children can learn," respectively.

Mr. Forrest commented that he was fine with the proposed changes.

Ms. Bellamy reviewed the changes to the Community section of the draft statement in greater detail for the board.

Mr. Forrest and Ms. Hays both indicated a preference for the original language in the Community section of the draft statement.

Ms. Bellamy noted that she would revise the draft statement further and submit those revisions to the board leadership for further review and input.

Adopt the Board's and Superintendent's Working Agreements

Ms. Bellamy reviewed the most recent changes to the district's draft Board and Superintendent's Working Agreements for the benefit of the board, noting that the primary revision was the clarification of language demonstrating how board leadership would determine if something was an action item or a future action item.

Approve Resolution on Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)

Superintendent Russell noted that the proposed language of the resolution had been amended to address the issue of growth trajectories of individual students as had been suggested by the board in previous meetings. He commented that the resolution would be presented to the board for action at their next meeting.

Approve a Resolution Supporting the Lane Community College Bond Measure 20-142

Dr. Martinez reminded those present that the board leadership discussion regarding Measure 20-142 had focused primarily on the precedents where the district had benefited from partnerships with LCC.

Ms. Bellamy distributed an information packet entitled "4J & Lane Community College Partnerships" and proceeded to brief the board on the primary aspects of the College Now and RTEC programs.

Ms. Bellamy clarified for the benefit of the board the enrollment statistics of district students involved in the College Now program.

Ms. Bellamy commented that funding for the RTEC program had been budgeted for the next two to three years in order for district students to continue in that program. She also noted that the funds for the program were not transferred to LCC until an individual student actually enrolled in the program.

Ms. Bellamy reported that the proposed resolution regarding the bond measure had been drafted by LCC leadership.

Mr. Smith suggested that language be added to the resolution in order to better reflect the level of enrollment and benefits to the district.

Mr. Torrey agreed with Mr. Smith's suggestion.

Approve a Resolution Opposing Measure 60 Regarding Statewide Teacher Merit Pay

Ms. Bellamy reminded the board that Ms. Gerot had spoken before regarding the proposed resolution in opposition to Measure 60 which had been provided by members of the Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA).

Ms. Gerot said that further revisions to the resolution had been made based on the board's conversations about the language of the OSBA resolution not being strong enough to reflect the feelings of the board's positions on the matter.

Ms. Hays thanked Ms. Gerot for her efforts regarding the revisions to the proposed resolution.

COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Hays updated the board on her work with the Yes For Schools campaign, noting that they were currently seeking funds to send out a mass postcard mailing regarding the program. She noted that the website for the program, www.yesforschools.net, was currently up and running.

Mr. Smith had no report and no further comments to share with the board.

Mr. Torrey expressed his hope that the board clearly understood there would be a shortage of funds to provide for programs or initiatives that were not part of the current district budget.

Mr. Forrest thanked the student representatives for their input and encouraged them to continue their involvement in the district.

Ms. Gerot reported she had had the opportunity to visit various site councils to discuss the local option levy. She encouraged the board to participate in future site council meetings.

Dr. Webber-Davis thanked the board leadership and district staff for the recent retreat. She noted that the retreat had provided the opportunity for some robust discussions that would benefit the district in many ways.

Dr. Martinez had no report and no further comments to share with the board.

ADJOURN

Dr. Martinez adjourned the regular meeting at 9:17 p.m.

George Russell
District Clerk

Charles Martinez, Jr.
Board Chair

(Recorded by Wade Hicks)

Attachments to Official Minutes:

1. Eugene 4J Mentor/Induction Program 2008-09 Flyer
2. Letter from Lane ESD Superintendent Debbie Egan to Parents Affected by Boundary Corrections
3. List of Properties within Boundary Lines to be Corrected
4. Grant Application Form: Roosevelt Middle School Safe Routes to School
5. Draft 2008-09 Board Goals & Annual Agenda
6. Guiding Beliefs and Values Statement
7. Draft 2008-09 Board and Superintendent Working Agreements
8. Resolution on Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)
9. Resolution Supporting the Lane Community College Bond Measure 20-142
10. Resolution Opposing Ballot Measure 60 Regarding Statewide Teacher Merit Pay Mandate